

***From Community to Individuality: How Digital Media Accessibility Has Changed the
Meaning of Traditional Flores Culture for Young Adults***

An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)

By

William Lami

Thesis Advisor

Dr. Jackson Bartlett

**Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana**

April 2020

Expected Date of Graduation

May 2020

Abstract

Indonesia's status as the 4th most populous country and largest Muslim majority nation make its economic rise (pre Covid-19) important as the world becomes more globally connected. The young adults of Indonesia represent its most media-savvy population, growing up as their country has developed internet infrastructure and grown its middle class. Young adults' response to this rapid change over the past twenty years has been broadly studied across the nation, with specific emphasis given to the more urbanized western region. This analysis seeks to build on this body of work by zooming in on Indonesia's more rural Eastern half, specifically in the Ngada region of the island of Flores and the traditional culture therewith in through ten interviews with young adults (ages eighteen to twenty-five) and older adults (ages forty and up). Flores, much like the rest of Eastern Indonesia, has lagged behind in urbanization and internet infrastructure, with its economy beginning to expand beyond agriculture as the island has experienced more connectivity through mobile data access. The changing media landscape has crafted a new reality for the young adults of Flores and as a result shifted the way in which they relate to their traditional culture. Compared with the previous generation, which discusses traditional culture in terms of their community, the current young adults of Flores have begun to relate to the ceremonies of rituals they participate in with concepts of individuality, which may be more appropriate as their futures may take them off of Flores and even out of Indonesia

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Dr. Jackson Bartlett for advising and guiding my proposal, research and writing. He not only contributed his time and experience with human subject research and writing, but also his positive attitude and encouragement to help see this project through. His passion for the social sciences has left an impression on me in and out of the classroom, and I wish him success in his time with the Honors College.

I would like to thank my father Josef Dou for guiding my understanding of traditional Ngada culture, contributing to my literature review and assisting my research as a translator. He supported me through encouragement and action throughout my research process.

I would also like to thank Ty, Madison, and Meredith for taking interest in my research, encouraging me and putting up with my many early mornings and late nights spent interviewing and writing.

Process Analysis Statement

This project began with a very broad question: How has the internet changed Flores, Indonesia? After visiting Indonesia consistently since I was very young to visit my Dad's side of the family, the how the island has changed is always something I notice and compare my life in the U.S. against. While the widespread use of cars, computers and cell phones existed throughout my childhood and early adulthood in my home country, in Flores (specifically, the Ngada region where my family is chiefly located), the adoption of many of the technology I take for granted here became very noticeable as I got older. Motor vehicles became pervasive, smart phone ownership became ubiquitous, tourism and urban development grew.

As I became older and more involved in some of the rituals and ceremonies that make up traditional Flores culture, I realized that the diffusion of internet technology in Indonesia was unique to every island and would interact with every island differently based on the preexisting culture. For an island historically dominated by agriculture and less connected with the rest of the nation, those effects would be felt most by the current generation of young adults, who would have grown up with digital media and adopted it. So the question became: How has digital media changed the way young adults relate to traditional culture in Flores, Indonesia?

My review of the existing literature lead me to read and look over several dozen or so works in the social science field, of which five were directly involved with the either the spread of digital media and its effects on the Indonesia economy and population or with young adult in Indonesia and the changes their lives have underwent as a result of technology, the economy and

education. As I suspected, Eastern Indonesia was given less attention compared with Western Indonesia, with only one work directly focusing on Flores.

To fill this gap, I conducted five in-depth interviews with young adults and five in-depth interviews with older adults who had lived on Flores for the majority of their lives. All of the young adults were either attending or closing out their academic careers at their respective universities. The older adults ranged in employment, from engineering to farming to political office, and as a result had diverse knowledge and points of view.

I had three objectives during my interviews. My first objective was to determine how involved the young adults were with digital media and why they used it. My second objective was to determine what economic and technological changes Flores had undergone in the eyes of the older adults. My third objective was to determine how each set of interviewees related to traditional culture and then determine any differences, if any.

Three or four of the interviewees knew enough English to answer my initial questions. For more in-depth responses and for the interviewees that did not know speak it well enough, I relied on Josef Dou, my father and translator who assisted me throughout my project. As a result, while my total interview time exceeds ten hours, part of that time is spent in translation. In addition, my first draft of research synthesis was much longer than my final draft (around eleven or twelve pages, not including my introduction, literature review, or conclusion). As my conclusion became more focused, I shed several pages of discussion on the responses from the older adults, who provided interesting but less necessary information.

This project has been the most involved I have been my Indonesian culture and family without actually being in the country, I admit that before I began the interviews I had many fears. What if the internet failed? What if the language barrier was too high? What if people did not

want to speak about their experiences? However, thankfully I managed to avoid those pitfalls. While I conducted the first interview on my own, without translation, the experience taught me that I need to give my interviewees the opportunity to hear and respond to a question in their native language if I want better insight. It's not simply a language barrier, but a cultural barrier that I had to cross to glean the personal statements and meaning that were so important in forming my conclusions.

Part of that cultural difference in Flores is how accepting it is compared with the U.S. Here we tend to draw lines in the sand and make dichotomies. Liberal vs Conservative. Black vs White. Religious vs Secular. Urban vs Rural. However, after this project I believe that Flores differs significantly partly due to the traditional culture. It is very accepting of outside forces of changes, assimilating and integrating them along their similarities rather than rejecting them based on their differences. For example, traditional ancestor worship and Catholicism has become intertwined, with some rituals making their way into the Catholic mass and the Catholic God becoming a part of ceremonies like Ka Sa'o. In Flores it was not too strange to see a white tourist partly dressed in the traditional costume during an event.

While I want my project to be a resource for anyone wishing to learn more about the changes going on in Indonesia and more about Flores culture, I also find that proposing, researching, and writing this project for myself has been a valuable experience and engaged me with a side of my family that is otherwise located on the other side of the world. I would encourage any multicultural person in the Honors College to explore a side of their culture that they otherwise may not have explored with their Senior Thesis Project.

The archipelago of Indonesia contains over seventeen thousand islands, six thousand of which are inhabited. The national language, Bahasa Indonesia, is only a second language to most Indonesian's, who prefer to speak in one of the over 300 different regional and local dialects, some of which can be specific to a single village. The diverse array of cultures that exist across the country are a point of pride for the most populous Muslim majority nation in the world. However, almost hidden from view (except for a few tourist destinations) is the island of Flores, in Indonesia's more rural Eastern region. Flores is unique in its Christian-majority, agricultural history and traditional rituals and ceremonies. However, the growth of infrastructure and tourism across the country and the economic and cultural globalization of Southeast Asia means that the social pressures of consumerism and Western pop culture are mingling with the traditional familial society on the island. And its effects are being felt most by the young people of Flores.

The existing literature on this intermingling focuses mostly on either the broader scope of the country or on the more industrialized western half in cities such as Jakarta. This research seeks to expand on Indonesia's less-studied and more rural Eastern region, focusing specifically on Flores and the young adults who have grown up and lived there for most or all of their lives. Their stories show that the conflict of global pop culture ideals and the familial structure Flores society, combined with other external factors such as career employment, have shifted their relationship with traditional Flores rituals, ceremonies and culture. Where the previous generation related to it with concepts dominated by community, the current young adults of Flores now relate to their cultural system with concepts of individuality, because they have felt the effects of technological and economical changes occurring across the country over their lifetime.

These changes come in the form of pressure felt from several fronts to achieve the neoliberal ideals of individualism, self-sufficiency, innovation and consumerism. Government policies/programs, secondary and tertiary education, and digital media all pressure youth (18-25) to adopt this highly individualistic. However, growing internet accessibility in Flores and Eastern Indonesia in general makes online communication of these ideals more influential with each passing year as infrastructure is built. Following this growth in internet accessibility the intertwining of economic growth, mobile phone usage and the spread of global pop culture, and the resulting effects on young people in Indonesia has been a subject of research for at least the past two decades.

Review of literature and background information

The country's earliest exposure to the internet came on the heels of the 1997 Asian economic crisis. Early on, Furuholt, Kristiansen, and Wahid (2017) identified an urban-rural gap in internet access. The divide between upper income and lower income and urban and rural was amplified as cities like Yogyakarta and Jakarta saw more internet access while outer islands fell behind due to a lack of awareness, demand and infrastructure. However, despite the persistent gap, internet use spread very quickly in Indonesia, with internet service provider licenses multiplying from 1 to 180 from 1996 to 2002. More specifically, young people (many of them students) represent a significant part of the segment demanding internet access and integrating internet use into their daily lives (Furuholt et al., 2017).

As the country has rapidly expanded its middle class and adopted a more globalized outlook, internet has become more available (especially through mobile smartphones). Carroll

(2019) notes that the 2008 recession led to increased capital invested into “emerging markets” as “yields on safe assets such as US Treasury bonds declined” (p. 24). In other words, Southeast Asian countries adopted friendly policies and demand for commodities declined in the west, more capital was invested into the Indonesian economy. As a result, Indonesia experienced “rising per capita incomes, declining rates of absolute poverty and an expansion of consumption” (Carrol, 2019).

Puspitasari and Ishii (2005) address the rise of mobile internet “leapfrogging” and how smartphone and feature phone data has helped to partially close the urban and rural gap in internet access. UNESCO goals such as “Poverty reduction and access to basic services” in 2010, the introduction of 3g in 2006 and 4g in 2013, and fierce competition amongst telecommunication providers had led to lower and more accessible prices (p. 437). Indonesian citizens “leapfrog” traditional wired internet by moving directly to smartphone and feature phone connectivity, indicated by low pc ownership and high mobile phone ownership (98%) (Puspitasari & Ishii, 2005).

Parker and Nilan (2013) relates this rapid economic and internet access growth to the Islamic resurgence of the early 2010s. The young men and women of Indonesia consume media and culture from a variety of sources. The “conflicting cross-currents of global pop culture messages and the messages of Islamic *dakwah* (missionizing)” creates a tension within young people as they seek to satisfy both (p. 3). Parker and Nilan state Indonesian adolescent development is youth is experienced differently because while “work status and independence from family” characterize western youth-to-adult transitions, in Indonesia “marriage and parenthood” remain the ultimate qualifiers that define someone as an adult. They hypothesize that “ambivalence” and “confusion” is the result of the two conflicting ideals that Indonesian

youth are exposed to in the 21st century. However, in the end their findings did not support that hypothesis, instead discovering that today Indonesian youth have “synthesized” both ideals by “aiming at material success combined with religious piety” (Parker & Nilan, 2013).

The youth-to-adult transition period in Indonesian is more fully explored by Schut (2016). Within the setting of Flores during the mid-2010s, young graduates feel bound by networks of interdependence in the Ngada region/culture. Ideas of “progress” and “development” ingrained by their education and a lifetime of political messaging conflict with what these educated young people consider the “backwards” culture that raised them and funded their degrees. Similar to the situation posed by Parker and Nilan, the result is confusion. Adding in the highly limited employment opportunities that require a degree creates a situation where young people want to contribute to Ngada society but cannot find the paying jobs to do so. This extends their dependence on their families and their status as an Indonesian “youth” (Schut, 2016)

Research on Indonesia’s young people and their internet use has been conducted on a broad scale, while a smaller body of works have dealt with specifically the island of Flores and young people’s struggle to resolve the conflict between pop culture and consumerism and their traditional culture and beliefs. This project seeks to connect those two concepts and study what online influences Flores youth follow and how those influences have positively or negatively affected their participation in and comprehension of traditional Flores practices.

Through ten in-depth interviews (five with 18-25-year-olds and five with those aged 40 and up), I have examined the changes between the young adults of Flores and their parents, the previous generation. Specifically, I have focused on both generations’ relationships with traditional culture, how and why young adults use social media and the internet, and the changes the previous generation has observed on their home island, especially technological ones.

The Global/National Focus of Digital Media vs the Local Focus of Flores Culture

The shift from community to individuality begins with how young adults on Flores have adapted to the changes in technology occurring on Flores and across Eastern Indonesia at large over the past 20 years. While traditional Flores familial society has been with the young adults of Flores since their birth, Global pop culture has approached the young adults of Flores along digital channels that have grown with them. Through the internet and social media, those young adults have developed an outward focus on national and global culture while participation in traditional culture teaches an inward focus on the island itself. The outward focus is shown in the five younger adults (aging from twenty-two to twenty-four) and their responses to questions about their own social media and internet, what drives their interest while online, and what effects they perceive on themselves as a result: Their interests lay in technology and global cultures/news and they found themselves influenced in their purchase behavior. Additionally, two who were considering their careers after university found that social media had influenced their perceptions of work possibilities off of Flores. The off-island direction of those interests lay in opposition to what those same young adults found important about the traditional rituals and ceremonies. The literal meaning of those same rituals and ceremonies are also very island-centered, with direct ties to the agricultural life, village, tribe, family, and even the actual material structure of the home.

Digital Media Usage and its Outward Focus

Jesse was one of those two young adults considering taking her career off-island. She is a university student in her last year, currently at home in Flores working on her thesis in which she is studying psychology and criminology. When she is on social media she loves to watch do-it-yourself videos, makeup tutorials and anything else that can make her happier and make her life easier. Her interests when online lie in tech, especially in robotics that can function to take over certain nursing responsibilities. She is amazed by tech developments abroad, when people find ways to do things that people in Indonesia would never have thought possible. For Jesse, technology as an interest satisfied both a professional and personal curiosity to expand her horizons into other countries.

Tech became a common theme throughout the interviews with the younger adults. Paul, Reeve and Mark also discussed technology as a driving interest while using social media or searching for information online. Paul's interests lay in his immediate automotive skills. Specifically, he owned a motorcycle and used the information he finds online to care for and maintain his vehicle. Reeve's motivation came from his studies in electrician work. Keeping himself up-to-date with the equipment he must be familiar with was part of achieving his ambition to become a career electrician in the future. Mark's interest in technology came from his academic studies following a shift to online classes after the onset of coronavirus in Indonesia. Social distancing and quarantine brings challenges that are being solved with technology and communication platforms. Between each person, their interest in technology as a result of their career interests, personal endeavors or current events have all directed them to resources they would not have found as easily on Flores. In Jesse's and Mark's cases, their

interests lie in problems that may lead them off the Flores in pursuit of technology that could further their academic and professional careers.

Paul was also considering his future off of Flores, but not so much for his professional career. He has an adventurous spirit and to him, social media and the internet are important for the connectedness they provide to the wider world. In particular, he likes to explore music and uses Instagram to follow rappers Eminem, Tyga, and other music artists from the United States, among other countries. YouTube is valuable to him because the content creators make “positive” videos that are “good for (us)”.

Reeve, Mark and Ash were also interested in global culture and events while they were online or using social media. For Reeve “knowledge” and “learning” are chief motivators behind his use of social media. Specifically, he values information on the world of business and economic progress. In addition, he wants to know more about cultures outside of Indonesia that he would normally not be exposed to on a daily basis. Sports news events are what primarily interests Ash when he is on social media. Specifically, he likes to follow soccer players who played in the world cup, especially those playing in football clubs in Spain. Mark’s current interest in global events lies in medical reports and news on coronavirus. However, his focus is on the positives not negatives. He makes an effort to determine what is and isn’t false or biased reporting, and has gained a great respect for the Chinese government for the medical “techniques” and “help” it is currently providing to Indonesia and other Asian countries to prevent large outbreaks and combat current cases. Again, a dominant number of the interviewees found themselves pursuing things away from Flores. In this case, they are exploring music, culture, business and sports.

In addition to global news, most of the young adult interviewees have all been influenced in the past by social media and the internet in their purchase behavior. Jesse has not made any purchases online but relies on online reviews to learn more about a product before making a real-world purchase. Reeve has bought equipment that relates to his field as an electrician because of information he's found online. Both Ash and Mark have bought T-shirts, pants and shoes online after seeing advertising on social media, with “quality” and “cheap” cost being some of the motivating factors behind the purchase decision. Reeve, Ash and Mark are all engaging in the increasingly connected economy Flores is undergoing due to the spread of internet access and social media.

Lastly, in regards to their plans for the future Jesse and Mark desired to leave Flores for career and work opportunities, with Jesse specifically citing limited opportunities on Flores as a motivator. Additionally, both stated that social media will have some influence on them in the future if they someday must decide to leave the island. Stories and images of career and life success in other parts of Indonesia are all over social media and often Jesse's and Mark's friends are part of that success. This in turn encourages both of them to consider taking their lives to other parts of the country. Mark stated that he would “like to be like him or her”, in reference to those men and women on social media who seem to have found their success off the island. Jesse and Mark both clearly exemplify situations in which the external social pressure of social media exerting a pull away from Flores.

Traditional Culture and its Inward Focus

Some opposition between digital media and traditional culture begins to emerge when young adults' responses across topics. Where social media and the internet have helped to focus young people outward off of Flores, traditional culture encourages a more inward focus. This was shown by each younger adult in their responses to questions about traditional ceremonies and rituals, their reasons for participating, and the meaning they found as a result. Additionally, cultural events large and small, like Reba and Ka Sa'o, are all focused on the family, tribe, and even specific houses. Young people participating in these events are often needed to make it proper and successful. They are also needed to perform much of the manual labor.

Many respondents cited their own responsibility to carry on the values and traditions of Flores culture when asked about their reasons for participation. When asked to elaborate, some said that their mothers and fathers would eventually pass and it would fall to them to continue the culture, with Jesse more specifically mentioning her generations responsibility to honor their ancestors. Additionally, many of them stated, when asked about how traditional culture might affect their decisions to leave Flores in the future, answered that they would always remember the rituals and ceremonies wherever their lives took them. Reeve elaborated a little more, saying that he would carry the culture with him if he decided to leave. For the rest of his life he will not be able to separate the many rituals and ceremonies such as Reba and Sagi (which is traditional boxing) from himself and his personality.

All four of them also said that they would return to Flores to take part in major events like Reba and Ka Sa'o. Reba is an annual celebration of thanksgiving, held to give thanks to God and honor the ancestors. In regards to a focus of inwardness, the celebration is tied to blessing

the village with a good harvest, tying the event to Flores itself and its agricultural traditions (FloresPlus). Ka Sa'o is a ceremony of thanksgiving for traditional Flores homes in the Ngadha region that have reached a mature age, encompassing many rituals and dances and lasting three days (Ka Sa'o: Daur Hidup Rumah Adat Ngadha). Similar to Reba, it is even more focused on the home (the literal structure) itself and is very rooted in the island (for example, traditional villages are built with the front entrance facing a mountain and the back entrance facing the sea).

Preparing for these major events takes plenty of work. Even in this work, the emphasis on young people being present in the village is there because of how labor is usually distributed. Bara, one of the older adult interviewees, stated that young people perform much of the manual participation like fetching and distributing food and drink. As an elder, he is less involved now that he spends more time directing others.

The inward nature of Flores traditional culture manifests itself in the rituals and ceremonies each of the younger adults participates in and in how they respond to them. However, simultaneously young adults on Flores are engaged in a digital environment connected with Indonesia and the world as a whole. The result is that as they have grown up within the traditional Flores society but simultaneously adopted new and increasingly accessible digital media, young adults face pressure from two competing fronts, each demanding attention and commitment in the opposite direction. To satisfy global pop culture and the pressures of social media, young adults on Flores should seek to embrace new technologies, buy new things, explore new cultures, and even more away to expand their career possibilities. To honor the meaning of and participate in traditional rituals and ceremonies like Ka Sa'o and Reba, they must stay and contribute to Flores. However, discovering the decisions of young adults to stay or leave Flores is not the end goal of this research. Rather, this conflict between outward foci and inward

foci affects how the current generation of young adults has shifted their relationship with traditional Flores culture when compared with the previous generation and their responses to the same questions.

A Shift from Community to Individuality

While the differences between their digital lives and their traditional lives emerged through the interviews with the younger adults alone, a second conflict arose after interviews with older adults on Flores, who aged around 45-54. While many of their answers were consistent with each, younger diverged from the older when asked about the meaning they found in participating in traditional Flores culture: Young adults on Flores relate to traditional culture with concepts of individuality, while older adults on Flores relate to it with concepts of community.

As previously stated, Jesse, Paul, Reeve, Ash and Mark all related to the traditional ceremonies and rituals they participated in with feelings of responsibility to carry them on, even going as far to say that they must continue the culture after their parents passed away. Additionally, most stated that if they left Flores in the future, the culture and meaning behind these traditional rituals and ceremonies would stay with them and be a part of them wherever they went as individuals. Between generations, these reasons shifted.

Bara is the current secretary for the National GOLKAR party in the Nghada region. Before that he was a party representative for 5 years and ran his own construction business. When asked why he participated in traditional rituals and ceremonies, he described them as similar to a Church and religious community, in which everyone joins together inside the culture.

Bara expanded on this idea and drew actual connections between traditional Flore customs and the structure of the Catholic Church (which has a dominant presence on the island): both during his youth and today the Church supports rituals and ceremonies like Reba and Ka Sa'o, and in some cases even incorporates certain ones into its own regular Catholic rituals (within which honoring the ancestors and worshipping God are combined). In addition, Bara related this question back to our earlier discussion involving the opening of the Flores community and economy to the outside world. He finds that the traditional community and family system of Flores is by nature open-minded to change, rather than resistant to it. Similarly, with his discussion on the Catholic Church and its acceptance of the ancestors, he believes that traditional Flores culture is incorporating the changes in society and technology that have occurred over the past 20 years and are occurring today.

Bara shared this theme with all five of the older adults. When asked about their reasons for participation in traditional Flores culture and the meaning associated with it, each related to concepts of family and community. Tilly noted that traditional rituals and ceremonies acted as a cultural unifier amongst families and tribes. In her own experience, much of her own participation in Flores cultural life has been spent as both a participant in her own family/tribe events and also as an observer of another's (in those cases, she was still present at the event but acted less as a participant because of her belonging to a different group). Neo found meaning in giving thanks for "our parents... our families", in the specific case of the ceremony of Reba. Lastly, Anthony spoke from his own personal interest in spiritual healing. His focus was on the connection/communion forged between the past (the world of the dead ancestors) and the living community on Flores. The family and tribe living today benefit from the guidance of the

ancestors in all daily activities, with the traditional rituals and ceremonies acting as the foci of that guidance and connection and a point at which to strengthen it.

It is in these families, tribes and households that the older adults on Flores tend to find meaning as it relates to traditional culture. However, even when sharing many viewpoints with the younger adults the most dominant concepts differed between both groups: when discussing traditional culture with the younger adults there was a shift towards individuality. When asked about her career plans and where they might take her, Jesse offered a particularly striking remark which begins to link this difference to the previous concept of the outward focus conflicting with the inward focus: She noted that on Flores, the little things that people do on Flores are not being valued. Jesse felt that the result is that individuals themselves, who perform these tasks every day, are also not being valued.

Young Adults Are Pushing and Being Pulled in New Directions

Jesse's choice in that moment, to focus on the efforts of the individual over the collective work of the community, is a brief look into the changing reality young adults on Flores are faced with today. The conflict of outward-focused digital media and inward-focused traditional culture is part of an array of forces pushing and pulling young adults on Flores away from the island. Young people becoming more engaged with a global community online and moving off of the island for education and job opportunities must come to terms with a different Flores than the one experienced by their parents. The result is a shift in the way in which young adults on Flores currently relate to their traditional culture, from concepts of community to concepts of individuality.

These forces start with the increase in mobile phone availability. For Flores as a whole, the increased availability of mobile phones and the internet access that comes with higher data speeds has led to changes in the economy. Most of the older adult interviewees noticed that Flores has opened up in the past 20 years as the island and Eastern Indonesia as a whole has become more connected. Tilly and Bara, speaking from their professional and political involvement on the island, expanded the discussion, seeing a shift from a previously agriculture-dominated economy on Flores to technology and tourism. Their observations correlate with Puspitasari and Ishii (2005) on the rise of mobile phone ownership and the spread of internet access through smartphone and feature phone data (“leapfrogging” traditional computer access common to other countries). With the introduction of 4g and increasing competition between service providers, rural Eastern Indonesia experiences increased internet access despite lagging behind in infrastructure, with Flores being part of this change. That same connectedness has introduced new livestock and farming techniques and technologies to Flores, as Bara describes, changing agriculture on Flores and improving efficiency. However, the side-effect of those new technologies is that work opportunities decrease.

Alongside these changes come a shift in how business is conducted and students are taught. The adult interviewees also saw the growth of online shopping and business in the same 20 years, stating that social media has grown beyond just a social network and become a tool for buying, selling and determining demand and availability. In addition, Bara and Nicki, alongside Tilly, also noted that the internet has become a valuable resource for students on Flores to learn. Despite other concerns, both saw that their own children were using their phones to complete school projects, with online research providing them information that otherwise would have been unavailable to them, or not provided by the Flores school system. As the internet has become

more accessible across Indonesia, children and young people have been among the first to adopt it into their daily lifestyle.

Infrastructure changes have also created a more mobile generation of young adults. Speaking from her perspective as an engineer, Tilly had noticed new construction methods increasing effective infrastructure design on Flores, which alongside the growth of motor vehicle ownership has made transportation far easier. Nicki's youth was spent less involved in the cultural life because transportation and infrastructure on the island was not as well established as it is today. Young people are able to travel from Bajawa (a larger commercial town) to Naidewa (a smaller traditional village) far more easily, encouraging mobility with the younger generation.

Conclusion

All these forces combined have created a new Flores for young adults today, both online and offline. The integration of digital media into their lives from a young age for both leisure and academics, exposing them to new technology, news, culture, music, products and jobs created a lasting enough impact for many of the young adults today to cite them as drivers of passion and curiosity. Offline, better roads and higher motor vehicle ownership as expanded transportation and mobility for young adults. New farming techniques have increased efficiency but decreased jobs, limiting employment opportunity for young adults. Simultaneously, the growth of Indonesia's middle class and development in the western region represent increased career opportunities off of Flores in urban areas, especially for those with a degree (Carroll, 2019). Those among them who have received a university education are also more likely to associate

the agricultural life of Flores with “backwardness”, and not the ideals of “progress” ingrained into them by several years of university classes (Schut, 2019).

As a result, the reality that young people face today is quite different from what the previous generation faced growing up. They are more prepared to take on the world as it is today, armed with horizons expanded far beyond what the previous generation was capable of achieving with media alone. Compared with what young adults have access today, older adult interviewees noted that during their youth media exposure on Flores came from less than one TV or radio per household. However, this new vantage point directing young adults' gaze off of Flores is at odds with traditional culture, which pulls them back with rituals and ceremonies directly tied to the village, family and house.

This conflict is felt in how they then relate to those same rituals and ceremonies. With life off of the island a much more immediate possibility for them, the young adults of Flores find meaning in Ka Sa'o and Reba as individuals, tasked with the responsibility of carrying on the culture and making it a part of them, where ever their lives take them today and in the future. Where the previous generation were much more rooted in a family, village and community, the current generation must bring to terms the inward focus of traditional culture with the outward focus of global pop culture and the realities of career employment.

Thus, when faced with the same ceremonies, rituals and cultural events as their parents and elders, young people on Flores approach them from a different perspective. Their perspective is influenced by the Eminem song they listened to last month, by the social media advertisement they saw for a Jakarta-based apparel line on Instagram last week, by the article they read last night about global Covid-19 prevention. Their plans for the future are influenced by the friend they saw celebrate a year at their nursing position in Kupang on Facebook. Their

love for their culture is enhanced by their habit of uploading pictures of their traditional Flores outfit to social media.

Through the interviews it was clear that all five young adults had a deep appreciation for Reba, Ka'Sao, and the countless other ways in which they honored God, the ancestors, and their homes and families. That appreciation is not lessened, but changed, by the changing reality they must rise to face as the newest working generation of young Indonesians. As the country's GDP growth remained steady through much of 2019 and 2020 (only slowing alongside the rest of the globe with the onset of Covid-19), Indonesia's young adults will be the most well-equipped to lead the country into a future dominated by digital media and technology. How each of them chooses to keep their own unique culture alive in their hearts is important as each one of the over 6000 inhabited islands of Indonesia becomes more connected with the rest of the archipelago, Southeast Asia, and the world a whole.

Works Cited

- Kristiansen, S., Furuholt, B., & Wahid, F. (2003). Internet Café Entrepreneurs: Pioneers in Information Dissemination in Indonesia. *The International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, 4(4), 251–263. <https://doi.org/10.5367/000000003129574315>
- Carroll, Toby. (2019). Context and conflict: the political economy of Southeast Asia's development from independence to hyperglobalisation. *Southeast Asia Research Centre (SEARC) Working Paper Series*, No. 195.
http://www.cityu.edu.hk/searc/Resources/Paper/19011122_195_WP_20190111_Dr%20Toby%20Carroll.pdf
- Puspitasari, Lia & Ishii, Kenichi. (2015). Digital Divides and Mobile Internet in Indonesia: Impact of Smartphones. *Telematics and Informatics*. 33. 10.1016/j.tele.2015.11.001.
- Parker, Lyn & Nilan, Pam. (2013). *Adolescents in Contemporary Indonesia*. Routledge.
- Schut, Thijs. (2016). Educated young people and und(der)employment in rural Flores, Indonesia. The University of Western Australia School of Social Sciences, Disciplines of Anthropology & Sociology and Asian Studies



Office of Research Integrity
Institutional Review Board (IRB)
2000 University Avenue
Muncie, IN 47306-0155
Phone: 765-285-5052
Email: orihelp@bsu.edu

DATE: March 9, 2020

TO: William Lami

FROM: Ball State University IRB

RE: IRB protocol # 1561088-1

TITLE: The effects of internet technologies on the relationship between young people and traditional culture in Flores, Indonesia

SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

DECISION: APPROVED

PROJECT STATUS: EXEMPT

DECISION DATE: March 9, 2020

REVIEW TYPE: Exempt Review

The designated reviewer for the Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed your protocol and determined the procedures you have proposed are appropriate for exemption under the federal regulations. As such, there will be no further review of your protocol, and you are cleared to proceed with the procedures outlined in your protocol. As an exempt study, there is no requirement for continuing review. Your protocol will remain on file with the IRB as a matter of record. All research under this protocol must be conducted in accordance with the approved submission and in accordance with the principles of the Belmont Report.

Exempt Categories:

	Category 1: Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, that specifically involves normal educational practices that are not likely to adversely impact students' opportunity to learn required educational content or the assessment of educators who provide instruction. This includes most research on regular and special education instructional strategies, and research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.
x	Category 2: Research that only includes interactions involving educational test (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met: (i) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through

	identifiers linked to the subjects; (ii) Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation; or (iii) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by 46.111(a)(7).
	Category 3: Research involving benign behavioral interventions in conjunction with the collection of information from an adult subject through verbal or written responses (including data entry) or audiovisual recording if the subject prospectively agrees to the intervention and information collection and at least one of the following criteria is met: (A) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of human subjects cannot be readily ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; (B) Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation; or (C) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can be readily ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by 46.111(a)(7).
	Category 4: Secondary research for which consent is not required.
	Category 5: Research and demonstration projects that are conducted or supported by a Federal department or agency, or otherwise subject to the approval of department or agency heads, and that are designed to study, evaluate, improve, or otherwise examine public benefit or service programs, including procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs, possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures, or possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs.
	Category 6: Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies, (i) if wholesome foods without additives are consumed or (ii) if a food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level found to be safe, by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
	Category 7: Storage or maintenance for secondary research for which broad consent is required: Storage or maintenance of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens for potential secondary research use if an IRB conducts a limited IRB review and makes the determinations required by 46.111(a)(8).
	Category 8: Secondary research for which broad consent is required: Research involving the use of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens for secondary research use, if the following criteria are met: (1) Broad consent for the storage, maintenance, and secondary research use of the identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens was obtained in accordance with §46.116(a)(1) through (4), (a)(6), and (d); (2) Documentation of informed consent or waiver of documentation of consent was obtained in accordance with §46.117; and (3) An IRB conducts a limited IRB review and makes the determination required by §46.111(a)(7) and makes the determination that the research to be conducted is within the scope of the broad consent referenced in paragraph (d)(8)(i) of this section; and (iv) The investigator does not include returning individual research results to participants as part of the study plan. Note: This provision does not prevent an investigator from abiding by any legal requirements to return individual research results.

Ball State Specific Exempt Categories

	Category 9: Research involving publicly observable online behavior. Any online behavior that requires a person's permission to access is considered private and does not fall under this category. Information that cannot be accessed by the general population would also be considered private.
--	---

	Category 10: Research involving BSU students who are under 18 but have legal authority over their FERPA protected information. Only studies that fall into another exempt category except for sampling from BSU students who are under 18 can be considered exempt in this category.
--	---

Editorial Notes:

1. approved.

While your project does not require continuing review, it is the responsibility of the P.I. (and, if applicable, faculty supervisor) to inform the IRB if the procedures presented in this protocol are to be modified or if problems related to human research participants arise in connection with this project. **Any procedural modifications must be evaluated by the IRB before being implemented, as some modifications may change the review status of this project.** Please contact Sena Lim at (765)285-5034 or slim2@bsu.edu if you are unsure whether your proposed modification requires review or have any questions. Proposed modifications should be addressed in writing and submitted electronically to the IRBNet as a "Modification/Amendment" for review. Please reference your IRB protocol number 1561088-1 in any communication to the IRB regarding this project.

In the case of an adverse event and/or unanticipated problem, you will need to submit written documentation of the event to IRBNet under this protocol number and you will need to directly notify the Office of Research Integrity (<http://www.bsu.edu/irb>) **within 5 business days**. If you have questions, please contact Sena Lim at (765)285-5034 or slim2@bsu.edu.

Reminder: Even though your study is exempt from the relevant federal regulations of the Common Rule (45 CFR 46, subpart A), Ball State has elected to hold you accountable to these regulations to encourage best research practices. You and your research team are not exempt from ethical research practices and should therefore employ all protections for your participants and their data which are appropriate to your project.